

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings of claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling user access to distributed resources on a data communications network, the method comprising:

receiving, by a resource server peer group directly from an end-user host system, a resource request for a resource stored on said resource server peer group, said resource request including, at time of first receipt of said resource request itself from a first transmission of said resource request directly from said end-user host system, a request for said resource and a rights key credential, said rights key credential comprising:

at least one key to provide access to a resource on said data communications network so that said at least one key is included in said resource request; and

a resource identifier included in said resource request, said resource identifier comprising a resource server peer group ID and a randomized user ID, said resource server peer group ID identifying said resource server peer group, said resource server peer group comprising at least one server that maintains a mapping between said randomized user ID and said at least one key, wherein said randomized user ID is associated with an identity of a user thereby protecting said identity; and

providing said resource by said resource server peer group when said resource server peer group matches said at least one key with an identifier in a set of identifiers associated with said resource so that said receiving, said providing and said matching are performed on said resource

server peer group without accessing another server outside said resource server peer group wherein said resource server peer group includes a plurality of resource servers.

2. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling user access to distributed resources on a data communications network, the method comprising:

receiving, by a resource server peer group directly from an end-user host system, a resource request for a resource stored on said resource server peer group, said resource request including, at time of first receipt of said resource request itself from a first transmission of said resource request directly from said end-user host system, a request for said resource and a rights key credential, said rights key credential comprising:

at least one key, each of said at least one key providing access to at least one resource on said data communications network so that said at least one key is included in said resource request, each of said at least one resource stored on a separate secure device; and

a resource identifier included in said resource request, said resource identifier comprising a resource server peer group ID and a randomized user ID, said resource server peer group ID identifying said resource server peer group, said resource server peer group comprising at least one server that maintains a mapping between said randomized user ID and said at least one key, wherein said randomized user ID is associated with an identity of a user thereby protecting said identity; and

providing said resource by said resource server peer group when said resource server peer group matches said at least one key with an identifier in a set of identifiers associated with said resource so that said receiving, said

providing and said matching are performed on said resource server peer group without accessing another server outside said resource server peer group wherein said resource server peer group includes a plurality of resource servers.

3. (Currently Amended) A program storage device readable by a machine, embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method for controlling user access to distributed resources on a data communications network, the method comprising:

receiving, by a resource server peer group directly from an end-user host system, a resource request for a resource stored on said resource server peer group, said resource request including, at time of first receipt of said resource request itself from a first transmission of said resource request directly from said end-user host system, a request for said resource and a rights key credential, said rights key credential comprising:

at least one key to provide access to a resource on said data communications network so that said at least one key is included in said resource request; and

a resource identifier included in said resource request, said resource identifier comprising a resource server peer group ID and a randomized user ID, said resource server peer group ID identifying said resource server peer group, said resource server peer group comprising at least one server that maintains a mapping between said randomized user ID and said at least one key, wherein said randomized user ID is associated with an identity of a user thereby protecting said identity; and

providing said resource by said resource server peer group when said resource server peer group matches said at least one key with an identifier in a set of identifiers

associated with said resource so that said receiving, said providing and said matching are performed on said resource server peer group without accessing another server outside said resource server peer group wherein said resource server peer group includes a plurality of resource servers.

4. (Currently Amended) A program storage device readable by a machine, embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method for controlling user access to distributed resources on a data communications network, the method comprising:

receiving, by a resource server peer group directly from an end-user host system, a resource request for a resource stored on said resource server peer group, said resource request including, at time of first receipt of said resource request itself from a first transmission of said resource request directly from said end-user host system, a request for said resource and a rights key credential, said rights key credential comprising:

at least one key, each of said at least one key providing access to at least one resource on said data communications network so that said at least one key is included in said resource request, each of said at least one resource stored on a separate secure device; and

a resource identifier included in said resource request, said resource identifier comprising a resource server peer group ID and a randomized user ID, said resource server peer group ID identifying said resource server peer group, said resource server peer group comprising at least one server that maintains a mapping between said randomized user ID and said at least one key, wherein said randomized user ID is associated with an identity of a user thereby protecting said identity; and

providing said resource by said resource server peer group when said resource server peer group matches said at least one key with an identifier in a set of identifiers associated with said resource so that said receiving, said providing and said matching are performed on said resource server peer group without accessing another server outside said resource server peer group wherein said resource server peer group includes a plurality of resource servers.

5. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for controlling user access to distributed resources on a data communications network, the apparatus comprising:

means for receiving, by a resource server peer group directly from an end-user host system, a resource request for a resource stored on said resource server peer group, said resource request including, at time of first receipt of said resource request itself from a first transmission of said resource request directly from said end-user host system, a request for said resource and a rights key credential, said rights key credential comprising::

at least one key to provide access to a resource on said data communications network so that said at least one key is included in said resource request; and

a resource identifier included in said resource request, said resource identifier comprising a resource server peer group ID and a randomized user ID, said resource server peer group ID identifying said resource server peer group, said resource server peer group comprising at least one server that maintains a mapping between said randomized user ID and said at least one key, wherein said randomized user ID is associated with an identity of a user thereby protecting said identity; and

means for providing said resource by said resource server peer group when said resource server peer group matches said at least one key with an identifier in a set of identifiers associated with said resource so that said receiving, said providing and said matching are performed on said resource server peer group without accessing another server outside said resource server peer group wherein said resource server peer group includes a plurality of resource servers.

6. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for controlling user access to distributed resources on a data communications network, the apparatus comprising:

means for receiving, by a resource server peer group directly from an end-user host system, a resource request for a resource stored on said resource server peer group, said resource request including, at time of first receipt of said resource request itself from a first transmission of said resource request directly from said end-user host system, a request for said resource and a rights key credential, said rights key credential comprising:

at least one key, each of said at least one key providing access to at least one resource on said data communications network so that said at least one key is included in said resource request, each of said at least one resource stored on a separate secure device; and

a resource identifier included in said resource request, said resource identifier comprising a resource server peer group ID and a randomized user ID, said resource server peer group ID identifying said resource server peer group, said resource server peer group comprising at least one server that maintains a mapping between said randomized user ID and said at least one key, wherein said randomized

user ID is associated with an identity of a user
thereby protecting said identity; and
means for providing said resource by said resource
server peer group when said resource server peer group
matches said at least one key with an identifier in a set
of identifiers associated with said resource so that said
receiving, said providing and said matching are performed
on said resource server peer group without accessing
another server outside said resource server peer group
wherein said resource server peer group includes a
plurality of resource servers.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1 wherein
said rights key credential further comprises a nested
credential referring to at least one credential relating to a
resource delivery mechanism.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 8 wherein
said providing said resource further comprises using said
resource delivery mechanism.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 2 wherein
said rights key credential further comprises a nested
credential referring to at least one credential relating to a
resource delivery mechanism.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 9 wherein
said providing said resource further comprises using said
resource delivery mechanism.